



## The Betico Croes School Olympics 2006

Celebrating five years and increased participation, the Betico Croes School Olympics held their opening ceremonies and first event on Saturday evening in the Guillermo Trinidad Stadium in Dakota. This year over 2000 students from forty-five schools ranging in levels from Kindergarten through High School will be participating in a variety of competitions over the next two weeks.

This School Olympics program, aimed at encouraging children to be active and to participate in sports will provide dozens of opportunities for healthy competition, and for families to participate in cheering on their young athletes. On Saturday, after introducing all the teams and an impressive introductory production conceptualized by master showman Freddy Montoya, the first activity of the Olympics began; a soccer match between the Colegio Pastoor Kranwinkel versus the Colegio Felipe B. Tromp.

The Minister of Labor, Culture and Sport, the Honorable Ramon Lee offered words of welcome to all the participants in the Olympics and their families that filled the bleachers of the stadium. Young Micky van der Vaart, a champion swimmer who will represent Aruba at the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 ran the length of the stadium to light the torch, as is the tradition with the start of any Olympic games.

Over the coming weeks, events will be held every afternoon from 3:00 P.M. until 6:00 P.M at various stadiums and sports fields around the island. The sports in which the children will participate are Swimming, Kickball, Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Softball, and Gymnastics. There will be a meet everyday except Sunday, May 20. A number of events will be conducted at the Frans Figaroa sport facility in Noord/Montana, YMCA San Nicolas, and the Guillermo Trinidad Stadium, which will also host the last event, the soccer championships, and award ceremony on Saturday, May 20. On Saturday May 13, the events will begin at the Frans Figaroa facility at 9:30 A.M.

The Caribbean Mercantile Bank (CMB) and Valero Refinery Aruba provided beautiful uniforms to most of the teams with a donation. Over twenty-five other companies also contributed funds for the games, and, in addition, CMB is providing the 10,000 Aruban Florins that will be awarded to the school of the winning soccer team in the boys division ages eight to twelve. SETAR, N.V., Aruba's telecommunications company, has provided the 5,000 florins prize that will go to the overall winning school in the grammar school division.

Healthy minds in healthy bodies is a saying still of value for every generations, particularly in these time so increased obesity in children. Teaching them to be active, team spirit and good sportsmanship is what the games hope to accomplish. They also provide the opportunity for children of all athletic ability levels to enjoy competition and to learn from it, and all that participate always do better with family and schoolmates present to cheer them on, so enjoy the events and get out their and root for your teams!